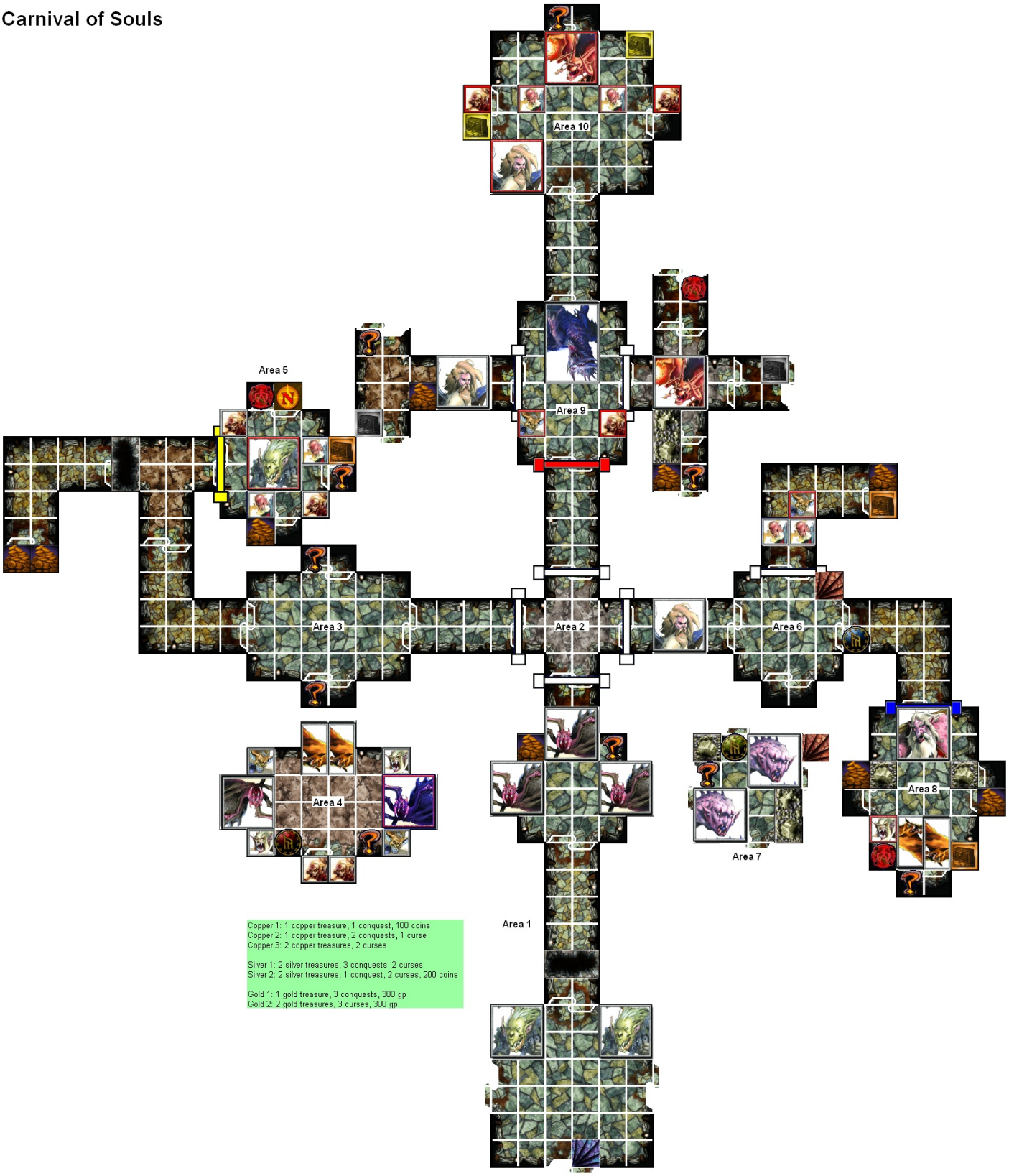
Carnival of Souls


Area 10
Area 5
Area 9
Area 3
Area 2
Area 6
Area 4
Area 8
Area 7
Area 1
Copper 1: 1 copper treasure, 1 conquest, 100 coins
Copper 2: 1 copper treasure, 2 conquests, 1 curse
Copper 3: 2 copper treasures, 2 curses
Silver 1: 2 silver treasures, 3 conquests, 2 curses
Silver 2: 2 silver treasures, 1 conquest, 2 curses, 200 coins
Gold 1: 1 gold treasure, 3 conquests, 300 gp
Gold 2: 2 gold treasures, 3 curses, 300 gp

Fan Created Scenario.

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Carnival of Souls

By Kelly Davies

Quest Background

It has been two months since anyone has had news from the residents of the Barony of Bonchance. The last news was just before the Carnivale du Grain, the barony's celebration of the grain crop that makes its ale the famous throughout the Civilized Lands. All attempts to reestablish contact with Bonchance have been turned away or destroyed by fearsome unseen creatures now inhabiting the lands surrounding the barony.

Baron Rishard of Vincerise commissioned you to try to reach Bonchance and find out what transpired there. Under a reflective shield spell cast on your party by Baron Rishard's court wizard, you arrived to find a town under siege.

The townspeople were clearly terrified, and their stories were chilling indeed. From their collected tales of horror, you have pieced together the following sketchy tale.

Shortly before the Carnival, Baron Aurier announced he was tired of waiting on King Patrois' promise of aid to defend the barony from the violent depradations of the bandit troops who moved into the local Greystone mountains.

The baron, a true though average wizard himself, and his court wizard Merveau gathered a conclave of local wizards. The conclave's intent, the baron announced, was to summon a guardian who would patrol the barony against the bandits. The summoning would coincide with the final night of the Carnival, when the Grain Moon was full.

The final night of the Carnival arrived, and the baron and his conclave had been sequestered in the castle since dawn. At midnight, just as the Carnival was due to end, and the summoning to occur, a fetid gale, rank with the stench of rotten flesh, roared in from all directions as an ebon blot arose from the ground to envelop the castle. Hideous wailing shrieks, as of men fearing for their very souls, descended from the castle's tower.

Since that fearsome night, the townspeople have been under constant attack. No one has been allowed to leave, and residents have been forced to band together in fear. Even so, thirteen people have disappeared, the latest this very morning. It is obvious that the source of Bonchance's dire woe lies somewhere in the Baron's castle.

Quest Goals

After talking with the terrified residents of Bonchance, you have made the short journey to the front door of Baron Aurier's castle. Your goal is to investigate the baron's castle and stop whatever evil has taken up residence here. You start with five conquest tokens, and if you run out of tokens before stopping the hidden evil, you will become a permanent exhibit at the Carnival of Souls.

Area 1 - Castle Entrance

As you step into the castle's front courtyard, you first notice that someone has a macabre sense of humour as the courtyard is festooned with banners and pennants depicting cruel violence and horrible anguish being visited on people in otherwise pastoral settings.

Then, you see two ogres dressed in parody of fool's motley of blood red and sickly green step out of the corners of the courtyard. Although their garb may be result of demented hunour, there is nothing laughable about the weapons the ogres are brandishing, nor is there anything remotely humourous about what the ogres are guarding.

Some fiend has transformed the entrance to the castle's front hall into a likeness of a draconic monster's face. The leering red eyes and razor sharp fangs sprouting from the entrance's ceiling and floor emphasize the miasma of terror rolling in waves from the entrance. It will take all your nerve to enter that hall, even if you defeat the ogres now closing in on you.

If the heroes attempt to pass through the entrance:

As you attempt to pass through the entrance, you are overcome by an incapacitating wave of terror and loathing. Obviously, someone in the castle has taken magic precautions to turn away intruders. You can either grit your teeth and try to force your way physically through the ward, or you can try to use your personal magic to at least temporarily suspend the ward for yourself. Which will it be? Brute force will certainly get you through eventually, but magic may let you rush in where angels free to tread.

A strong ward of fear and aversion has been placed on the hall's entrance. Any hero wishing to pass through the mouth must perform one of the two actions described below. The hero may only attempt one action per turn, and must perform one of the two actions every time they enter the hall.

1) The hero may sacrifice two movement points to pass through the entrance.

2) The hero may attempt a magic roll using the number of dice defined on their character card only. No enhancements from belongings nor surges are permitted. The hero must roll at least two damage points to pass through. If the hero fails to roll two damage points or rolls a miss, the hero may not pass through the entrance this turn.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker:

Sandwiched underneath a pedestal in the corner of the room, you catch a glimpse of a folded piece of stained parchment. Pulling the parchment out, you read the following desperate plea for help.

"This may be the last note I ever get to write as a free man. That creature has either destroyed or enslaved the other members of our conclave. All exits, no matter how small or how inconvenient are being guarded so I fear that I may never in person warn the world the tragic results of our incredible folly.

The spell that Merveau and I had constructed was designed to beseech Cyanis of the White Plane to send us a White Guardian to assist in the defense of my barony and my subjects. The spell had proceeded to the climax when something horrible happened. Whether the spell was intrinsically flawed, an alignment of the Random Factors interefered, or the Darkness was waiting for a powerful summoning spell to corrupt, we found our spell energies diverted instead to the Black Plane.

That diabolical atrocity is what came through our spell portal. Instantly, it attacked us at our weakest moment when the corrupted spell energies were backlashing and draining us of our vitality. Four of us perished immediately; they were the lucky ones. For two weeks now I have seen the others found, and I fear I will not be able to hide much longer. The

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creature is particularly searching for me now.
Before I face my certain doom, I must take this last chance to warn anyone who comes after. The creature is strong, far stronger than its kind has any right to be, but it is entrapped in the castle until it can exact a blood price for its freedom. It must sacrifice thirteen souls by arcane and hideous ritual before the setting of the Hunter's moon. Once it completes the sacrifice, it will be released, completely unfettered, on our world. Even the gods may not be able to defend us then.
There is once chance for our world, as lunatic as it may sound. If one were to use the Spell of Banishment using the creature's True Name and then destroy the creature's material focus that ties it to our Plane, then the creature would be vulnerable to mortal attack. But first, one must be foolhardy to enter the creature's demesnes in the deeps of the castle."

The note is signed by Baron Aurier Bonchance.

Area 2 - The Carousel

Peering into the hallway crossing, you see nothing but four identical iron doors leading in four directions. Nothing seems threatening here, but an air of uncertainty pervades your thoughts as you enter.

The Carousel is a trap. It consists of four identical doors leading in the four cardinal directions that will confuse the heroes by forcing them into a random hallway. The Carousel can only be overcome if a hero in the party in the crossway is carrying the compass that can be found in the baron's bed chamber.

If a hero attempts to open a closed door while in the crossway and no one in the party has the compass:

As you attempt to move the heavy iron door, the door behind you slams shut, and you experience a wave of nausea. The door ahead of you slams open and you are forcibly ejected into the waiting hallway. You fall stunned to the hallway floor.

Only one door to the crossway can ever be open at one time. If a hero in the crossway attempts to open a closed door, close any open door to the crossway, randomly select one of the four doors to the crossway (this includes the door the hero entered through), and move all heros in the crossway through that doorway. Place a stun token on every hero thus ejected from the crossway, and close all doors to the crossway.

If a hero attempts to open a closed door while in the crossway and someone in the party has the compass:

Even though you feel the room spin, thanks to the compass in your party, you are not deceived by the apparent motion.

Area 3 - The Hall of Mirrors

As you enter a vast hall, you are taken by how eerily quiet the room appears. Broken statuary and ornaments litter the floor, and streaks of blood and muck foul what must have been a elegant and well-appointed reception hall. Curiously, large silver mirrors mounted in alcoves on either side of the hall are untouched.

If a hero ends his turn on either of the two encounter markers in the hall:

As you gaze into the pristine surface of the mirror, you clearly see your companions' bright reflections. However, as you continue to peer intently, the shadows of the reflected room appear to roil and writhe with all manner of fiends. A quick glance back into the hall shows nothing amiss, though. Still, you wonder why these mirrors were left when all else was destroyed in the hall.

If a hero attempts to break the mirror:

You draw back to destroy the enchanted mirror, but as you do, the hem of your cloak brushes the mirror's surface. Instantly, you and your nearby companions are sucked into the silvery-dark depths of the mirror.

Place the hero and any adjacent compantions into the center of the Reflected Room. Place stun markers on all the heroes thus transported.

Area 4 - The Reflected Room

Dazed, you peer around the hall. It is obvious that this room is not the same room you were just in for there are no mirrors here while the frescoes, mottoes, and carvings on the wall all appear backwards. Of course, there is also the matter that the shadows in this room truly are filled with fiends.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker:

As your boots scuff the floor, you notice a torn piece of parchment. Picking it up, you find the following note scrawled in jerky and disjointed writing.

"Not red for the Master. Oh no! Red is the colour of rage. Master will not be minded of the rage of his rivals now that he has claimed this Material Plane. Never red, never rage, never, never, never! Master is kind to those who shield him from rage."

Once the heroes kill the last monster:

With a soul-rending shriek the last monster falls beneath your onslaught. As it does, you notice a small door-sized mirror in the shadows behind it. Can this be a portal back to the castle?

After the heroes have claimed the rune and clue in the Reflected Room, have them touch the mirror. Transport them back to the Hall of Mirrors. Do not place any new stun tokens on the heroes.

Area 5 - Baron Aurier's Bed Chamber

You burst into the room to find a party of monsters tearing apart what appears to be Baron Aurier's bed chamber. An ogre, strangely and grotesquely painted with a clown's whiteface, in the middle of the room appears to be directing a thorough and destructive search. At your abrupt entrance, the

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ogre wheels around. His surprise is only momentary as he rasps "Kill the intruders. The master must not be interrupted." "Yes, Mighty Agkarak", chorus the others as they advance for the kill.

If a hero ends his turn on the compass marker:

On the floor, you find a dented brass compass rose. Although the glass cover is broken, the compass needle sill appears to swing true to north.

Give the compass marker to the hero who found the compass. Whenever a party of heroes in the Carousel includes someone carrying the compass, the Carousel trap is not triggered, and the party may exit any door they wish. Note that someone must be carrying the compass.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker after all the monsters are dead:

Searching through the wardrobe the monsters were ransacking, you find a scrap of parchment caught in the cedar panels lining the interior. Scrawled in more jerky writing is the following note.

"Blue is blasphemy to the Master for blue is the colour of the home of the pathetic demagogues who claim to protect this Material Plane. but they will learn dearly so dearly that the will of Jarkaza is not to be denied. A thousand pardons, O Mightiest of the Mightys for I did not mean to mention that which names you True. But yet I cannot obliterate that name for it enfolds me in the rapture of a thousand broken souls and comforts me like unnumbered screams. It is the word Blue that should be forever struck from the tongues of those who will bow to the Master."

Area 6 - The Empty Room

"You fools will meddle no more", growls the manticore facing you. Master will reward me greater for disposing of such worthless midden as you. The manticore springs forward, blocking the hall with his wings.

If the heroes defeat the manticore:

Stepping ruthlessly over the manticore's remains, you spy the room that the manticore was protecting. However, the room appears completely empty. Not even cobwebs cover these walls.

If a hero steps on one of the center tiles in the room:

As you step into the middle of the room, you feel the ground rush up to you. Or are you rushing to the floor? No, it must be you that is falling.

Remove the hero to the Snake Pit. Place a stun marker and inflict two wounds from the fall on the hero. These wounds are not reduced by armour.

Area 7 - The Snake Pit

Dazed and injured, you push yourself off the floor of what appears to be a cave sealed into the rock. Hissing voices mock you from the shadows as nagas slither in to see what prey has fallen into their trap.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker:

In the rubble on the floor you find a broken piece of slate with more jerky writing. Carefully brushing off the rock dust on the slate, you read the following note.

"Yellow is an abomination. It is the colour of that accursed eye that roams the accursed sky and sears the tender mercies of my poor Master. O Master, wouldst that I could put out that eye for you so you could gaze peacefully on the bountiful lands that belong rightfully to you. When we are free of this stone prison, I will put out that eye for you if you but let me prove the worth of this wretched servant."

If the heroes kill the nagas:

The last naga convulses violently in its death throes. As it does, its tail slams into the cave wall, knocking aside a pile of rubble at the wall's base. Behind the rubble is a dark, narrow, winding tunnel leading up. Perhaps it is the way back to the castle.

After the heroes have claimed the clue in the Snake Pit, have them travel up the winding corridor to the corridor leading to the Laboratory.

Area 8 - The Workroom

As you open the door, you hear a tremendous voice shout near the door "Otha, we no need look. Strangers come to own death," and a weary voice replies from further in the room "Then smash them, fool, so I can finish here." The door is wrenched out of your hands by a giant dressed in a leopard-skin loin cloth with greasily slicked hair and moustache. You would laugh out loud but that large dumbbell the giant wields like a mace is no laughing matter. Behind the giant, you see a sorcerer dressed in red and green directing what looks to be two hell hounds, bizarrely dyed in red and green with poodle hair cuts, to finish burning a stack of items in the stone fireplace.
From the scattered stacks of broken bookcases and jars and the glimmering pools of multi-coloured liquids on the floor, you wonder if this room was Merveau's or Baron Aurier's magical workroom. However, you have no more time to wondering as the giant strongman swings his makeshift weapon.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker after all the monsters are dead:

Now with the monsters slain, you have ample time to sift through the wreckage in the back of the fireplace. The hellhounds were doing an admirable job of arson, but a few items, all the worse for wear, did seem to survive. One of those items is a small tattered scroll bound with a cloth-of-

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-gold ribbon. Such a precious wrapping and yet thrown on a hearth to burn, this scroll must be something those villains were desperate to destroy.
Cautiously opening the scroll, you see arcane symbols and words written in gold, silver, and bronze. The surface of the scroll shimmers as if lightly coated with diamond dust. As you skim the words, you realize that this is the Spell of Banishment that Baron Aurier was referring to. The spell is simple enough although there is a gap in the spell where the name of the creature to be banished must be read.

Give the Rune of Death token to the hero who takes the scroll. Only the hero carrying the scroll may invoke the spell of banishment, and then only if they know the creature's true name.

Area 9 - The Waiting Chambers

As the door to the audience waiting chamber quietly opens, your hopes at any surprise entrance is spoiled by the glaring presence of a white dragon, striped in black like a jungle tiger cat, waiting at the far end of the room.
A cold reedy voice whipers from the corner, "You know you mortals must die,why must you always resist?" The creatures in the room pounce upon you.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker in the west subchamber:

Caught under the mangled frame of a ruined portrait is yet another piece of parchment with the same disjointed scrawl as you have seen elsewhere. Whoever this madman is, he certainly is a prolific writer. The parchment reads as follows.

"Indigo is the colour of worthless ink and of gutless royalty. Master will destroy both. What Master needs written can be properly inscribed using the blood of those pathetic puppets and charlatans that think themselves rulers. There is only one Master and hence only one true ruler. Indigo is no colour for the master."

Mixed with a few stray copper coins, is yet another scrawl of your favourite insane author. You read the following written still yet in that jerky and disjointed handwriting.

"Violet! Violet! Violet! Master will not associate with any colour that imbecilic humanoids use to describe the "majesty" of mountains. I suspect those sneaky dwarfs are behind such blasphemy. When Master is crowned the Highest King of Kings, I will tell him to smite down all the world's mountains and grind them to dust. Then, we will see only true majesty that will cause the dwarfs to wail and burn in anguish for their precious mountains."

Area 10 - The Demon's Playground

Important: When setting out this area of the map, do not place the encounter token until a hero has invoked the Spell of Banishment.

As you stride purposefully into the Baron's throne room, you stop and retch with disgust for arrayed around the room are the bodies of twelve men, women, and children. All are posed in scenes of incredible malevolence, blood lust, and cruelty, and all their faces show the same gut-wrenching mixture of ultimate terror and anguish. These must be the unfortunate townspeople who have disappeared in the last two months.
At the far end of the room hunches a demon with red and green-blotched skin whose ragged leathery wings loom over an altar bearing the immobilized body of a young man. The demon's talons are scoring the man's skin in preparation for flensing; the man is still alive, though barely, and in terrible agony.
You move to rush the demon with weapons drawn, but you are stopped cold as the demon glares at you over its shoulder. "Naughty little children shouldn't play with nasty toys", the demon hisses softly. As it speaks, your weapons and armour, magic and mundane alike, transform to tin plate, pot metal, and willow.
"That's better," the demon chortles. "Now, if you give your toys to Gorgath, my ticket collector, perhaps I will let you join my fathful servants." As the demon speaks, you realize that it is not alone. A giant, who must be Gorgath, steps menacingly towards the door as two sorcerers flank the demon. One of the sorcerers wears a mangled emblem around its neck that you belatedly recognize as the ruined royal seal of the Barony of Bonchance.

This is the demon's playground and so long as the demon's focus remains intact, the demon is invulnerable to all attacks. Also, the demons transformation spell affects all armor, weapons, and magic artifacts in the room. Any transformed blade is no better than a dagger while any transformed range weapon is no better than a bow and arrow. Magical artifacts and attacks simply do not work in this room.
Whenever a hero attempts an attack using a blade or other melee weapon, have the hero roll one red and one yellow die. Whenever a hero attempts an attack using a ranged weapon, have the hero roll one blue die and one yellow die. No black die are used at all unless it is a natural ability of the hero (i.e. it is mentioned on the hero's character card). Magic attacks do not work at all.
Any hero wearing armor is treated as if he were wearing no more than leather armor (+1 Armor). Shields do not work at all.
If a hero escapes the demon's playground, his weapons, armour, and magical attacks all return to normal so long as he does not re-enter the room.

If the hero with the Rune of Death token invokes the Spell of Banishment:

Bravely standing your ground amidst the carnage, you begin to shout the activations for the Spell of Banishment. The spell scroll grows warm to the touch as you read the spell aloud. At the middle of the spell, where you must true name the creature to be banished, you shout "Jarkaza". At this point, Jarkaza turns to you and roars with anger, but it is already too late. Suddenly, the scroll erupts into a stream of jewelled particles that carom violently across the room until it strikes the wall behind the demon's altar in a mercurial splash of light. The light reveals a hidden shelf in a dark recess of the wall where something glints merrily.

Place the encounter marker in the room as noted on the map.

If a hero ends his turn on the encounter marker (after the Spell of Banishment has been read):

In the alcove behind the demon's bloody altar, you find seven bottles arranged in order of the colours of the rainbow. Above the bottles is a sign that reads as follows.

Pick one bottle if you dare.
Pick one bottle if you care.

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Choose the bottle wrong,
And your life mayn't be long.
Choose the bottle true,
And a fight still waits for you.

This alcove is a riddle. The hero on the encounter square must pick one bottle to break. The correct bottle is one of the seven colours of the rainbow, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, or violet. The scrawled parchments scattered around the castle all mention colours that the "Master", the demon Jarkaza cannot abide. The notes eliminate red, yellow, blue, indigo, and violet as possibilities which leaves only orange or green. Green is the correct answer, but the hero only has a 50% chance of guessing this correctly.
If the hero attempts to break the wrong bottle, he is struck for 10 wounds of electrical damage that are not stopped by armor. If the hero breaks the right bottle, the entire castle goes dark which enables you to place the follwing monsters in the throne room (Demon's Playground) and the Waiting Chambers:

1 Master Dragon
1 Master Naga
1 Master Manticore
2 Master Bane Spiders
2 Master Beastmen
2 Master Hellhounds

The heroes' weapons, armor, and magical attacks are all returned to normal, and the demon is now vulnerable to attacks.
You may wish to assist the heroes by pointing out the demon was rather fond of green as it appeared in various costumes and on the demon's own skin. Or even let the hero break the green or orange bottle without penalty.

If the hero attempts to break the wrong bottle:

As you reach for the bottle, a massive bolt of magical energy erupts from the bottle into your outstretched hand. You suffer massive internal injuries as you realize that that was not Jarkaza's focus.

The hero suffers ten wounds not cancelled by armor.

If the hero attempts to break the correct bottle:

You pick up the bottle and smash it to the ground with all your might. As the bottle shatters, the castle is suddenly plunged into utter blackness. In the blackness you hear howls, roars, and other evil noises. When the shadow passes, you realize that Jarkaza has summoned more allies to protect him and the castle.
Fortunately, you also realize that all your weapons and armor appear normal once more. Perhaps Jarkaza can be vanquished after all.

The heroes weapons and armor all revert to normal attack rolls and capabilities.

If the heroes destroy Jarkaza and his followers:

After the last monster crashes mortally wounded to the stone floor, you think you hear, in the ensuing quiet, the faint whistles of a steam-driven calliope fading away in the distance. Shaking your head, you see the monsters' corpses, including Jarkaza's, fall into piles of white fluff that melt away like spun sugar in a gentle rain.
You have won, but you still shudder when you realize how close the world came to utter ruin. However, you still smile ruefully, and you hope that any celebration the people of Bonchance hold for their victorious heroes does not include any carnivals.

The heroes have won and receive five conquest tokens.

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